

increases, 71 percent increases, 43 percent increases? Again, these aren't increases for 1 year, these are increases that my ratepayers are stuck with. They are stuck with them because they signed an Enron contract and because we have a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that basically says: Yes, they have been manipulated, but we don't care, you still have to pay that rate.

I do not want this to happen to other parts of the country. I don't want to see economies like the Northwest economy, or the west coast economy, which is a critical part of our Nation's economy, suffer the consequences of manipulation of energy prices. The American people, to whom I have to answer when I go home to Washington State, or in other parts of the country if I travel, say to me: How come I am stuck with an 88 percent rate increase? How come I am stuck with a 61 percent rate increase? How come I am losing my job because our company can't afford the high electricity costs? or, How come my school district is paying high electricity rates and we have to pay a higher tuition? How come our school district is asking for a levy because we have higher electricity rates? People are not even taking action on giving us relief.

We will come back at this body on what we should do about past bad actions. But what we need to do tomorrow on the Cantwell market manipulation amendment is say that market manipulation of energy prices is wrong and that an energy title that fails to address these issues is not satisfactory.

I could take the last few minutes I have tonight, of my 1 hour, and tell you six or seven things that are also wrong with the Domenici electricity title. There are lots of schemes in there that run towards a market-based system on regional transmission organization and standard market design that I know my colleagues from the South and parts of the West probably are not too anxious to hear about, aren't too excited that I put in play. The Domenici amendment is a step closer to that.

Why do they want more of a free market? Because they want to see having that free market without the regulatory aspects of the Public Utility Holding Company Act, or having oversight of mergers, or having these kinds of hammers making sure no manipulation takes place. They want to see how much further prices can be manipulated. They want to see how they can have a free rein on what really is a needed utility for the American people.

I think, regarding those RTO and standard market design schemes that are also part of the Domenici underlying amendment, it is the absolutely wrong time to be talking about moving towards more change. We have just had this crisis. My State is still paying for this crisis. We are going to still be paying for it for years.

I understand the President is coming to the Northwest in August. I hope the

President has an answer for why his administration, and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, have not dealt with this issue. I hope he has an answer, to say to ratepayers why we should continue to be gouged on this issue; why we in the West, even though contracts have been manipulated, still have to pay those prices.

I would say to him: Mr. President, Washington State has a bright future. It still has a software economy. It still has an aerospace industry. Yes, it has been challenged, but it is still strong. We have a burgeoning biotech industry. We have a huge trade community. We have a vibrant, diverse agricultural economy throughout our State. But none of those can continue to exist with exorbitant energy prices that have been manipulated.

I hope when he comes to Washington State, he has an answer. I can tell you right now, that answer will not be well received if it is about just creating more supply. We are all for creating more supply in Washington State, and we are all for diversifying, but we are not for market manipulation.

We have to think through these other aspects of the Domenici amendment on RTOs, regional transmission organizations, standard market design and the other elements that really do call into question our ability to regulate the cost of electricity, for which the American people count on us. I hate to think, after 70 years of having a similar pyramid scheme push us into having the Public Utility Holding Company Act, that somehow this body will not get the message. Instead of just dealing with this crisis that we have dealt with in electricity—maybe not next year, maybe not in 5 years, but 7 years down the road—we end up having a similar crisis with natural gas, and, instead of just affecting the west coast and Washington ratepayers, it impacts the whole country.

Fair energy prices are part of having a healthy economy. Affordable energy prices help to continue to stimulate economic growth. But manipulated energy prices are not just. They are not reasonable. They are not in the public interest. This body ought to take strong action against them.

I know my colleagues all care about this issue. We wanted to do the right thing on securities law. We wanted to do the right thing on accounting law. It is time, with the Cantwell amendment tomorrow, to do the right thing on making sure that energy market manipulation is prevented and does not happen again.

I yield the floor.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— Executive Calendar

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, as in executive session I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, after consultation with the Democratic leader, the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of Executive Calendar No. 310, the nomination of William H. Pryor, Jr., to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit; provided further that there then be 4 hours for debate equally divided in the usual form; and that following that debate the Senate proceed to a vote on the confirmation of the nomination with no intervening action or debate; further, that the President then be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I modify my request to allow for 8 hours of debate.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I modify that to ask for 10 hours of debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Ms. CANTWELL. I object, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF WILLIAM H. PRYOR, JR., OF ALABAMA, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE ELEVENTH CIRCUIT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of calendar No. 310, and I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of William H. Pryor, Jr., of Alabama, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the live quorum under Rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the cloture motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the